

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 056445

72

ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY NEA: ALATHERTON, JR.: HLK

3/26/73 EXT 29464

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R 272302 Z MAR 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

INFO USINT CAIRO

S E C R E T STATE 056445

EXDIS

E. O. 11652 - GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, EG, IS

SUBJECT: ISRAELI QUERY RE U. S.- EGYPTIAN CONTACTS

1. DURING CONVERSATION MARCH 26, ISRAELI CHARGE IDAN ASKED DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON IF THERE HAD BEEN ANY U. S.- EGYPTIAN CONTACTS SINCE ISMAIL' S VISIT TO WASHINGTON. ATHERTON SAID MINISTER GREENE HAD RECENTLY SEEN ISMAIL TO FOLLOW UP HIS EARLIER APPROACH TO FOREIGN MINISTRY AS PART OF OUR DEMARCHES IN ARAB CAPITALS RE ARAB GOVERNMENTS' SUPPORT FOR OR TOLERATION OF BSO/ FATAH ACTIVITIES. ATHERTON SAID ISMAIL HAD NOT RESPONDED DIRECTLY ON TERRORISM QUESTION BUT HAD TAKEN INITIATIVE TO RAISE REPORTS, BASED ON MARCH 14 BEECHER STORY IN NEW YORK TIMES, RE ALLEGED NEW U. S. DECISIONS ON MILITARY SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL. ISMAIL' S ATTITUDE IN THIS CONVERSATION HAD BEEN QUITE RESERVED; HE HAD MADE POINT THAT THIS " ANNOUNCE- MENT" OF NEW U. S. MILITARY SUPPLY TO ISRAEL DID SERIOUS DAMAGE TO ATMOSPHERE FOR FUTURE PEACE EFFORTS. NOTING THAT BEECHER STORY HAD ELICITED ADVERSE PRESS AS WELL AS PRIVATE COMMENT IN CAIRO, ATHERTON SAID THERE WAS FOR
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PAGE 02 STATE 056445

PRESENT A NEW CLOUD OVER U. S.- EGYPTIAN RELATIONS.

2. IN RESPONSE TO IDAN'S QUERY RE WHAT WE WERE SAYING TO EGYPTIANS ABOUT BEECHER STORY, ATHERTON REPLIED THAT WE DECLINE TO DISCUSS U. S.- ISRAELI ARMS RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS. WE HAVE SIMPLY TOLD EGYPTIANS, AS WHITE EVEN BY THE FACT THAT THE 20.1 MILLION

ACRES (8.1 MILLION HECTARES) SET- ASIDE IN 1972 WAS EQUIVALENT TO 42 PER CENT OF THE ACREAGE ACTUALLY HARVESTED. WITH THE ELIMINATION OF THE REQUIRED SET- ASIDE IN 1973 EXCEPT FOR FARMERS CHOOSING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE VOLUNTARY ADDITIONAL SET- ASIDE IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE ACREAGE DIVERTED FROM WHEAT WILL BE ABOUT ONE- THIRD AS MUCH AS IN 1972. THUS, MORE CROPLAND WILL BECOME AVAILABLE IN 1973 FOR ADDITIONAL PLANTINGS OF SPRING WHEAT, FEED GRAINS, SOYA BEANS OR FORAGE BY THE REMOVAL OF THE SET- ASIDE REQUIREMENT." PAGE 34, FIRST PARAGRAPH, LAST TWO LINES, REWRITE AS FOLLOWS: " ACQUIRED THROUGH LOAN SETTLEMENTS AND PURCHASES BY THE CCC - EQUIVALENT TO 2.1 PER CENT OF TOTAL PRODUCTION IN 1971-72." LAST PARAGRAPH, REWRITE AS FOLLOWS: " APRIL - 31 JULY) AND CCC STOCKS OF WHEAT AND OTHER GRAINS ARE BEING SOLD TO STABILIZE MARKET PRICES." ROGERS

UNCLASSIFIED

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** EXDIS

*** Current Classification *** SECRET

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE056445
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: ALATHERTON, JR.: HLK
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SECSTATE WASHDC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730340/aaaaijla.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 NOV 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26-Nov-2001 by elbezefj>; APPROVED <03-Jan-2002 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 980105
Subject: ISRAELI QUERY RE U. S.- EGYPTIAN CONTACTS
TAGS: MASS, PFOR, EG, IS
To: CAIRO
TEL AVIV
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005